

Exploring Careers with a Liberal Arts Degree

The Career Center

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- ▶ Take stock of your current situation in choosing a career.
- ▶ Learn the role your personal characteristics play in choosing a career.
- ▶ Compare and contrast various careers as they relate to your skills and interests.
- ▶ Connect majors to the real-world occupations they may lead to.
- ▶ How to take action on the information you learn from this module.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Things to Know First

Knowing Yourself

Exploring Careers

Taking Action

Review



Topic 1 Things to know first



What does it mean to have a career path?

Your career path will be determined by a combination of your academic and professional choices, experiences, and opportunities.

Knowing more about your personality, strengths, interests, and values helps you manage your career.





Having a growth mindset is most helpful in choosing a career.

Few things are more important to a person's success than their ~~mindset~~ how they think and feel about themselves and their work. A healthy or growth mindset can keep you going when things are tough, and a worried or fixed mindset can make challenges even more difficult.

Successful people not only reflect on their work, but also actively seek to take positive steps and develop a strong mindset.



What does it mean to have a career today?

The modern career is likely to have more facets and take on a greater number of forms than careers of previous generations. Adaptability, willingness to learn, skill acquisition, and other traits will be among your greatest assets as you mature in your professional path.

- A typical Gen Z individual will have 17 jobs and five different careers over their working lives.
- More than 70% of college graduates have jobs unrelated to their major by the age of 35.





Identifying the Expectations of Others

The expectations of other people in your life may have a big influence on your career direction. Each of us grows up within a “family culture” impacting choice. This has pros and cons. Either way, it is important for you to have awareness of those expectations and consider how they influence the choices you make for yourself in your career.

Some questions to consider:

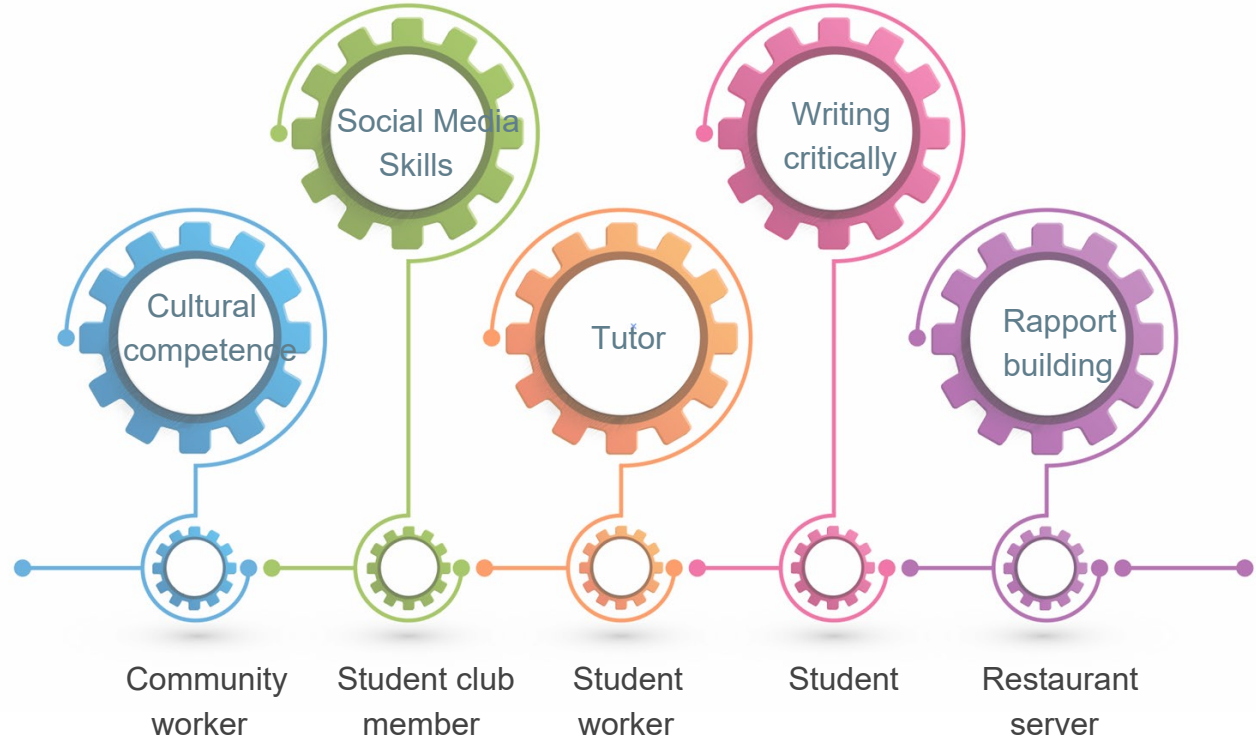
- What did your family members do?
- What do they expect you to do?
- What do you want to do?



Topic 1 Knowing yourself

How do my current strengths/skills start me on a career path?

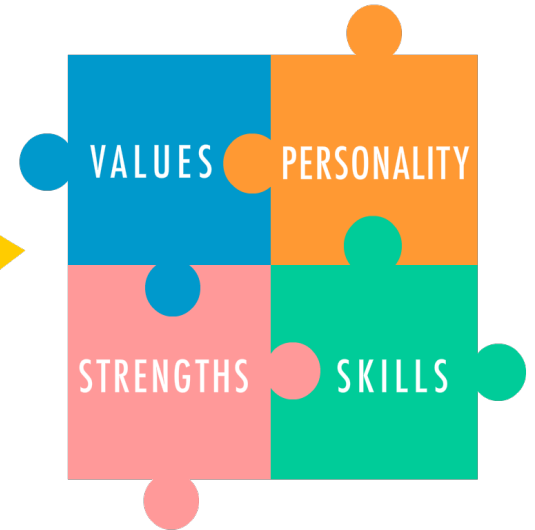
Whether you know it or not, you have a number of existing transferable skills from your course work and job/volunteer experience that are applicable to your potential career path.





One of the most important things to remember is that you are unique. Consider the elements that contribute to finding your best fit career.

- What are your strengths and knowledge?
- What are you interested in?
- What needs do you want your work to meet (income, skills, diversity, sense of belonging, etc)?





Assessing Your Values

Knowing your values (those things you consider important in life) will help you better predict what you may be most passionate about in your career.

Some questions to consider:

- What gives you purpose?
- How can your ideals connect to a career?



PRO TIP: Processing who you are with others can help give clarity. Consider asking a friend or family member for their feedback. Use the [Getting Feedback exercise](#) on the NDMU Career Center webpage.



Evaluating Your Strengths & Knowledge

Knowing your strengths will help you to realistically consider the types of occupations that you are likely to be successful in.

Some questions to consider:

- What are you really good at doing?
- How are those strengths/skills useful in a workplace?
- What strengths/skills are not developed, but would like to learn?



Connecting Your Personality with a Career using an assessment

Knowing yourself is essential when finding the right work environment. Personality type is determined by the patterns of thinking and behavior that you develop over time.

The free assessments on the [NDMU Career Center webpage](#) help you learn more about your personality, interests and values (desires) based on thoughtful responses about how you prefer to direct your energy, process information, make decisions and organize yourself; Enabling you to better align who you are with a variety of occupations.

These assessments should be reviewed with a career counselor and should be considered only as an indicator.

A wide-angle photograph of a two-lane asphalt road stretching straight into the distance. The road has a double yellow line in the center and white lines on the sides. The landscape is a vast, open plain with dry, brownish vegetation. In the far distance, a range of mountains is visible, with significant snow cover on their peaks. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with scattered, light-colored clouds. A semi-transparent blue banner is overlaid across the bottom half of the image, containing the text.

Topic 2: Exploring Careers



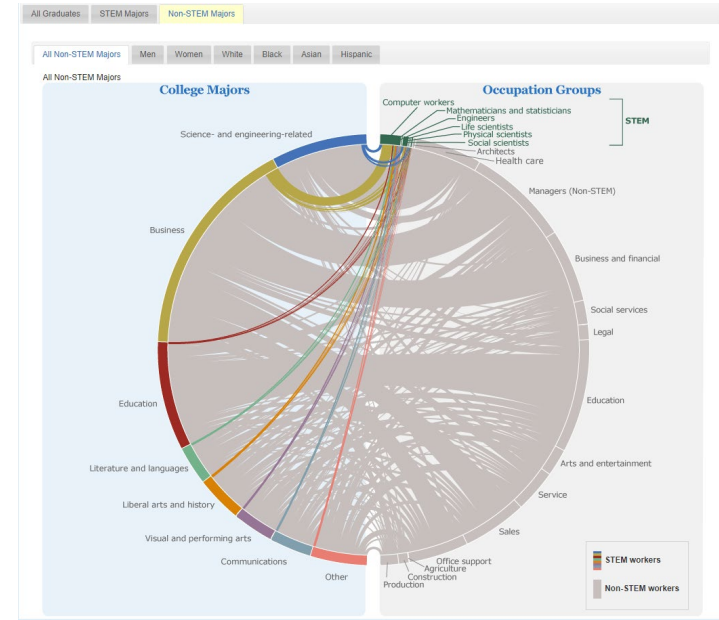
What are industry clusters and how can they illustrate different paths?

Careers by clusters helps to organize careers in related categories. You may notice assessment results that the occupations matched with your personality are in similar clusters.

In general, careers within the same cluster will share similar strengths/skills. These are the abilities you'll want to develop through your major courses

See the different pathways in the link.

Where do college grads work (career clusters)





How does a major connect to a career?

In many cases, you do not need to have a degree in a certain major to have a career in it. The following slides provide steps & resources that help connect different majors to their related careers.





How do I connect my major to my possible career options?

Sites like [What Can I Do With a Major in?](#) help you explore the relationship between majors, skills, & occupation categories

The Career Center has many of these guides. They are located in the hallway outside Theresa Hall 120.

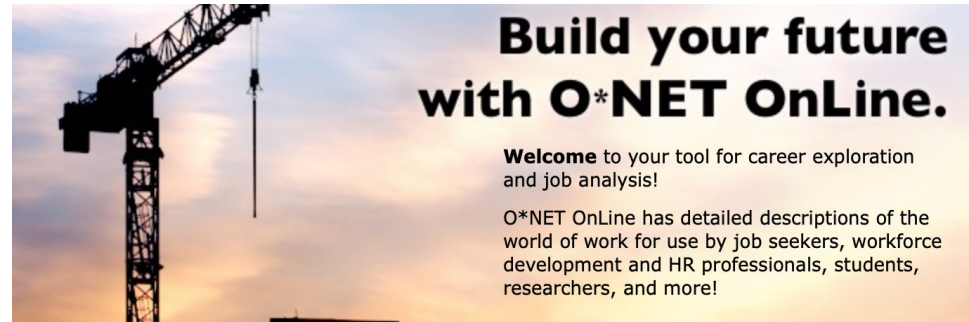
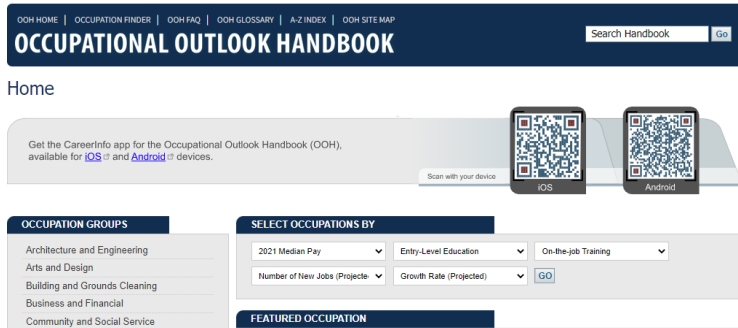




What will work in a future career actually look like?

[OOH Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) is your tool for career exploration to find information on careers, education required, job outlook in the future, wages, and geographical areas where the careers are in high demand.

[O*NET OnLine](#) is your tool for career exploration and job analysis with detailed descriptions of the world of work for use by job seekers, students, researchers, and more. Browse groups of similar occupations to explore careers.





Topic 3: Taking Action



What if I want to explore a certain career more?

If there is a career you are interested in learning more about, the online resources in the previous section are a great place to start.

For other next steps, there are three useful strategies you can use to learn more about the “day-in-the-life” within a profession and how that aligns with your skills and goals.

WAYS TO EXPLORE:



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Exploring a Career - Start by Networking

Use networking to:

- Explore career opportunities
- Learn more about a major, industry or company
- Gather advice from different perspectives
- Tap into the hidden job market

The three aspects of effective networking are:

- Meeting People
- Building Relationships
- Maintaining Relationships



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PRO TIP: A great book called, *The 2 Hour Job Search* by Steve Dalton teaches you how to network directly with people working at organizations of interest. It's available at the LNDL library.



Exploring a Career - Networking

Connecting with NDMU Faculty:

Make it a priority to develop relationships with faculty members and instructors in your academic department. Not only can they give you insight to the field, they can also serve as excellent references, and possibly refer you to colleagues or professionals in the field.

Meet with your instructors during their office hours or schedule a time to meet with them. Rather than just discussing your grade or class assignments, get their opinions about developments in the field, or ask about their career path and research interests. Take time to get to know your professors and build a true relationship.



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Exploring a Career - Networking

Connecting with NDMU Alumnae/Alumni:

Many NDMU alums want to help by providing industry tips, job search help, and more. Speak with people who have been there. Get advice, insights, and prep from people who are willing to share their knowledge and make a difference.



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Email or call the Alumni Relations Office at ndmalum@ndm.edu or 410-532-5201 or the Career Center. Either office can connect you to relevant alums.



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Exploring a Career - Identity based

Your identity may be a central part of knowing yourself and assessing where you want to be in the workplace. There are student groups, alumni groups, and external groups that can serve as a great resource in building relationships and learning more about career options. Consider:

- Groups that are niche to career and identity such as: [Queer in AI](#), National Society of Black Engineers ([NSBE](#)), [Out Professionals](#), [Pride Network](#), [National LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce](#), American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity ([AAAED](#)), Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement ([HACE](#)), [Asians in Higher Ed](#), or American Association of People with Disabilities ([AAPD](#))



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Exploring a Career - Job Shadow

Job shadowing is a short, unpaid chance to get a behind-the-scenes glimpse of a profession and a specific targeted job. It usually involves committing yourself to a half day in a work environment with a professional who has a position you'd like to pursue.

Job shadowing can help you learn a lot about company culture, the type of people already in the field, and how you might fit into a particular profession.



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Exploring a Career - Job Shadow

For the best results regarding your shadow day...

Before your shadow day

- Do even more research about the company and the particular location where you will go
- Put together an appropriate outfit and write down questions you have about the industry and this specific job
- Inquire about accessibility accommodations if needed

On your shadow day

- Bring a notepad and pen to take notes
- Bring your questions with you
- Arrive on time
- Thank the person hosting you
- If you feel nervous, take a few deep breaths
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Introduce yourself to everyone you meet



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Exploring a Career - Informational Interview

An informational interview is part information session, part networking opportunity. You are asking the questions about the industry or company in which you hope to work.

Think of it as a chance to learn the real inside scoop about your chosen profession.

Good advice on how to be successful pursuing an informational interview is available on [the Muse website](#)



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Pro Tip: This can be a great opportunity to ask professionally about workplace culture, diversity practices, or professional development.

Exploring a Career - Informational Interview

For the best results in informational interviews...

Before the interview

- Research the company
- Research the person doing the interview
- Develop questions. Ask about industry trends, their insights, and advice they would give.
- Dress appropriately for the person(s) you are meeting, but not formally
- Arrive on time

During the interview

- Be mentally present
- Don't ask for a job
- Impress the interviewer
- Get referrals for other people in the industry



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Review



What can I do with this information?

1. Download the [decisionmaking grid](#) on the Career Center page for Decisionmaking.
2. Complete it with the self-knowledge and occupational information you attain.
3. Send a copy to your advisor or instructor (if applicable) to go over with them.

THE END

Congrats! Your hard work will pay off.

We hope this information was helpful on your journey to set your college and career goals

